NUMB. XXII.

The SPECTATOR.

Quodcunque oſtendis mihi ſic incredulus odi. Hor.

Monday, March 26. 1711.

THE Word *Spectator* being moſt uſually underſtood as one of the Audience at publick Repreſentations in our Theatres, I ſeldom fail of many Letters relating to Plays and Operas. But indeed there are ſuch monſtrous things done in both, that if one had not been an Eye-witneſs of them, one could not believe that ſuch Matters had really been exhibited. There is very little which concerns human Life, or is a Picture of Nature, that is regarded by the greater Part of the Company. The Underſtanding is diſmiſſed from our Entertainments. Our Mirth is the Laughter of Fools, and our Admiration the Wonder of Idiots; elſe ſuch improbable, monſtrous, and incoherent Dreams could not go off as they do, not only without the utmoſt Scorn and Contempt, but even with the loudeſt Applauſe and Approbation. But the Letters of my Correſpondents will repreſent this Affair in a more lively Manner, than any Diſcourſe of my own; I therefore ſhall give them to my Reader with only this Preparation, that they all come from Players, one or two of whom are rational, others ſenſitive and vegetative Actors, and others wholly inanimate. I ſhall not place theſe as I have named them, but as they have Precedence in the Opinion of their Audiences.

Mr. SPECTATOR,

'YOUR having been ſo humble as to take No-'tice of the Epiſtles of other Animals, em-'boldens me, who am the wild Boar that was kil-'led by Mrs. *Toſts*, to repreſent to you, That I 'think I was hardly uſed in not having the Part 'of the Lyon in *Hydaſpes* given to me. It would 'have been but a natural Step for me to have per-'ſonated that noble Creature, after having behav-'ed my ſelf to Satisfaction in the Part above-'mention'd: But that of a Lyon, is too great a 'Character for one that never trod the Stage be-'fore but upon two Legs. As for the little Reſi-'ſtance which I made, I hope it may be excuſed, 'when it is conſidered that the Dart was thrown at 'me by ſo fair an Hand. I muſt confeſs I had but 'juſt put on my Brutality; and *Camilla*'s Charms 'were ſuch, that beholding her erect Mien, hear-'ing her charming Voice, and aſtoniſh'd with her 'graceful Motion, I could not keep up to my 'aſſumed Fierceneſs, but died like a Man.

I am,

Sir,

Your moſt humble Servant,

Thomas Prone.

Mr. SPECTATOR,

'THIS is to let you underſtand, that the Play-'houſe is a Repreſentation of the World in 'nothing ſo much as in this Particular, That no 'one riſes in it according to his Merit. I have acted 'ſeveral Parts of Houſhold-ſtuff with great Ap-'plauſe for many Years: I am one of the Men in 'the Hangings in the *Emperour of the Moon*; I have 'twice performed the third Chair in an Engliſh O-'pera; and have rehearſed the Pump in the *Fortune 'Hunters*. I am now grown old, and hope you 'will recommend me ſo effectually, as that I may 'ſay ſomething before I go off the Stage: In which 'you will do a great Act of Charity to

Your moſt humble Servant,

William Screne.

Mr. SPECTATOR,

'UNderſtanding that Mr. *Screne* has writ to you, 'and deſired to be raiſed from dumb and 'ſtill Parts; I deſire, if you give him Motion 'or Speech, that you would advance me in my 'Way, and let me keep on in what I humbly 'preſume I am a Maſter, to wit, in repreſenting 'human and ſtill Life together. I have ſeveral 'times acted one of the fineſt Flower-pots in the 'ſame Opera wherein Mr. *Screne* is a Chair; there-'fore upon his Promotion, requeſt that I may ſuc-'ceed him in the Hangings with my Hand in the O-'range-Trees.

Your humble Servant,

Ralph Simple.

Drury.

Drury-Lane, March 24. 1710-11.

SIR,

'I Saw your Friend the Templar this Evening 'in the Pit, and thought he looked very little 'pleaſed with the Repreſentation of the mad Scene 'of the *Pilgrim*. I wiſh, Sir, you would do us 'the Favour to animadvert frequently upon the 'falſe Taſte the Town is in, with Relation to Plays 'as well as Operas. It certainly requires a Degree 'of Underſtanding to play juſtly; but ſuch is our 'Condition, that we are to ſuſpend our Reaſon to 'perform our Parts. As to Scenes of Madneſs, you 'know, Sir, there are noble Inſtances of this Kind 'in *Shakeſpear*; but then it is the Diſturbance of a 'noble Mind, from generous and humane Reſent-'ments. It is like that Grief which we have for 'the Deceaſe of our Friends: It is no Diminution, 'but a Recommendation of humane Nature, that in 'ſuch Incidents Paſſion gets the better of Reaſon; 'and all we can think to comfort ourſelves, is im-'potent againſt half what we feel. I will not men-'tion that we had an Idiot in the Scene, and all the 'Senſe it is repreſented to have, is that of Luſt. 'As for my ſelf, who have long taken Pains in perſo-'nating the Paſſions, I have to Night acted only an 'Appetite: The Part I play'd is Thirſt, but it is 'repreſented as written rather by a Dray-man 'than a Poet. I come in with a Tub about 'me, that Tub hung with Quart-potts; with 'a full Gallon at my Mouth. I am aſhamed to tell 'you that I pleaſed very much, and this was intro-'duced as a Madneſs; but ſure it was not humane 'Madneſs, for a Mule or an Horſe may have been 'as dry as ever I was in my Life.

I am,

Sir,

Your moſt obedient

and humble Servant.

From the Savoy *in the* Strand.

Mr. SPECTATOR,

'IF you can read it with dry Eyes, I give you 'this Trouble to acquaint you, that I am the 'unfortunate King *Latinus*, and believe I am the 'firſt Prince that dated from this Palace ſince *John* 'of *Gaunt*. Such is the Uncertainty of all hu-'man Greatneſs, that I who lately never moved 'without a Guard, am now preſſed as a common 'Soldier, and am to ſail with the firſt fair Wind 'againſt my Brother *Lewis* of *France*. It is a ve-'ry hard thing to put off a Character which one 'has appeared in with Applauſe: This I experi-'enced ſince the Loſs of my Diadem; for upon 'quarrelling with another Recruit, I ſpoke my 'Indignation out of my Part *in recitativo*;

——— *Moſt audacious Slave*
Dareſt thou an angry Monarch's Fury brave?

'The Words were no ſooner out of my Mouth, 'when a Sergeant knock'd me down, and ask'd 'me if I had a Mind to Mutiny, in talking things 'no Body underſtood. You ſee, Sir, my unhap-'py Circumſtances; and if by your Mediation 'you can procure a Subſidy for a Prince (who ne-'ver failed to make all that beheld him merry 'at his Appearance,) you will merit the Thanks 'of

Your Friend,

The King of *Latium.*

ADVERTISEMENT.

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